

# **CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2006**

**WESTERN HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**400 PHENIX AVENUE**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: 6:00 P.M.**

**PUBLIC SESSION: 7:00 P.M.**

## **MINUTES**

The regular monthly meeting of the Cranston School Committee was held on the evening of the above date at Western Hills Middle School with the following members present: Mr. Archetto, Mrs. Greifer, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Stycos, and Mr. Traficante. Mr. Palumbo and Ms. Iannazzi were absent with cause. Also present were Mr. Scherza, Mr. Nero, Mr. Balducci, Mr. Votto, Mr. Laliberte, and Mrs. Lundsten.

The meeting was called to order at 6:14 p.m. It was moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Stycos and unanimously carried that the members adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RI State Law 42-46-5(a)(1) and contract and litigation pursuant to RI State Law 42-46-5(a)(2).

Mr. Lupino, acting Chair, reconvened the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Mr. Lupino stated for the record that both Mr. Palumbo and Ms. Iannazzi were excused from this meeting.

## **I. Executive Session Minutes Sealed – October 16, 2006**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Traficante and unanimously carried that the October 16, 2006 Executive Session minutes remain confidential.**

## **II. Minutes of Previous Meetings – September 13, 2006; September 18, 2006**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Traficante and unanimously carried that the minutes of the September 13, 2006 and September 18, 2006 meetings be approved.**

## **III. Public Acknowledgements / Communications**

**There was nothing at this time.**

## **IV. Chairperson Communications**

**Mr. Lupino stated that he wished to get some input from the committee members and administration regarding a serious situation at the Veterans Memorial Ice Rink. The**

bubble has burst so far. When the rink was first privatized years ago, he was on the School Committee. Several assurances were made that no Cranston students would be affected by the privatization meaning they would still be allowed the same amount of ice time, practice time, etc. and that would be the priority for the rink. That happened again when the rink management changed several times throughout the years that they were made those assurances. The current rink management earlier this year took it upon themselves to cancel RI Interscholastic League games in the main rink and move them to the bubble. He didn't know how they were going to accomplish this because anyone who has been involved in hockey knows that is the most well-attended games of the week. The proposed bubble has no capacity for observation other than standees. Now the bubble rink is not here. It is putting the Interscholastic League in dire straights to find ice. They have women's games being scheduled, and it is putting Cranston's athletes in a bad situation. It is something that either the committee together or together as a school system should demand their rights. He further commented that he could see no reason why when a rink of this size is being run that the priority should have been the Interscholastic League games in the main rink and the public skating in the bubble if it ever gets blown up. He asked administration and anyone from the committee for their comments regarding this.

Mr. Traficante asked if the Mayor's office had been approached regarding this issue, and Mr. Lupino responded that there was a

meeting last Thursday; but he could not attend because of a previous commitment. He had Councilman McDonough read a letter into the record expressing his particular personal involvement and questions about this situation to bring it to light. He was not apprised of what was happening. He does know that there are some definite issues with the local building codes concerning the bubble. Some people have mentioned ordering the rink and using outdoor ice. This is almost an impossibility because of the Rhode Island climate. The winters are too erratic to make it work. At this point, the School Committee doesn't have a response to it. Also, he did not do it in official capacity as representing the committee. Mr. Traficante recommended that the Superintendent and the Athletic Director set up a meeting with the Mayor's office immediately to try to resolve this issue because hockey season is here. Mr. Lupino added that it seems the rink management is thumbing their noses at the students in Cranston, and that shouldn't occur.

Mr. Scherza stated that he has not been so advised that this is the case so he has nothing official. He further commented that he has a slightly different understanding, but he asked the committee for time to verify the information. He was told approximately one month ago that the Interscholastic League would not have use of the rink both nights but they would one night. The rink would be closed off a second night but not that the Interscholastic games would be moved to the bubble. He was not sure what was accurate but asked for an opportunity to find out what was and wasn't happening. Mr. Lupino

said that he didn't just dash off the letter; he had a conversation on the morning of that meeting with Mr. Mezzanotti from the Interscholastic League.

Page 3      October 16, 2006

Right now they are trying to juggle twenty-four games that were scheduled for the bubble, and there is no place to put these people. They actually gave up ice time at other rinks to come to this facility because of travel situations, and now that ice has been sold; and they don't have any ice. He did his homework in speaking with Mr. Mezzanotti, and he felt that the priority should have been in the municipal rink with the overflow or the public skating or the Friday night casual skater going into the bubble.

Mr. Lupino referred to the new ruling concerning Rhode Island General Laws that states that a public speaker can speak on a non-agenda item, and the committee can discuss it.

## **V. Superintendent Communications**

There was nothing at this time.

## **VI. School Committee Member Communications**

Mrs. Greifer noted the fact that Resolution No.'s 06-10-12 through 16

regarding grants being applied for total \$54,620.00, and the school department is actively pursuing grants.

In addition, Mrs. Greifer reported that recently Cranston Public Schools was recognized by Kids First which is a healthy kids' organization. At a breakfast recently held, Cranston Public Schools was recognized as the "School System of the Year" for their efforts in promoting healthy schools. This has come as a result of the previous Nutrition Committee which goes back approximately four years which became the Wellness Committee. Many people worked very hard on this committee including the Food Service people, Mike Marrocco, who has been to all the meetings and provided invaluable information. However, the real driving force behind this and the person who has been the most dedicated is School Committee member Steven Stycos. He has kept this whole thing on track and has done an extraordinary amount of research and follow-through. Without his efforts, there is no way that the Cranston schools would have won this recognition. Mrs. Greifer thanked Mr. Stycos.

Mr. Lupino noted that besides the four candidates he saw, there were no School Committee candidates in the audience. He further stated that he would make no comment about them not being at this meeting.

## **VII. Public Hearing**

### **a. Students (Agenda/Non-agenda Items)**

## **b. Members of the Public (Agenda Matters Only)**

**There were no students who wished to speak on an agenda or non-agenda item.**

**Page 4      October 16, 2006**

**Valerie Shulie, 27 Farm Street – Mrs. Shulie stated that she was very happy to see the resolution regarding class size at the high schools on the School Committee agenda. It has been a great concern of hers, her children, and many parents that she knows. The class sizes at Cranston East and Cranston West need to be looked at and addressed. She looked forward to a creative and exciting way to address this issue to help the students to move forward.**

## **VIII. Consent Calendar / Consent Agenda**

**Mr. Lupino stated that the following Resolutions would appear under the consent agenda: No.'s 06-10-5, 06-10-6, 06-10-7 with addendum, 06-10-8 with addendum, 06-10-9, 06-10-10, 06-10-11, 06-10-12, 06-10-13, 06-10-14, 06-10-15, 06-10-16, 06-10-17, 06-10-19, and 06-10-20.**

**NO. 06-10-5 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following certified personnel be appointed as substitutes on a temporary basis as needed:**

**N'Italia DeAngelis Elementary, PK-6**

**Marie Donovan Secondary English**

**Kara Tennett Elementary**

**Amy Hanson General Subject Matter**

**Mary Salvatore Art, PK-12**

**Diana Rowey General Subject Matter**

**Karen Burns General Subject Matter**

**Linda LeBeau Secondary Social Studies**

**Kimberly Dugan Special Education, Middle/Secondary**

**Stephanie Accetta Special Education, Elementary**

**Caryn Langon Special Education, Elementary/Middle**

**Carol Marciano Early Childhood, PK-2**

**Melissa Fabrizio Special Education, Elementary/Middle**

**Stephen Pope   General Subject Matter**

**Virginia Driggers   General Subject Matter**

**Orah Bilmes   Secondary Social Studies**

**Miriam Gillespie   Special Education,  
Elementary/Middle/Secondary**

**Despina Diko   General Subject Matter**

**Lisa Passante   Elementary**

**Amy Rojek   Special Education, Elementary/Middle**

**Jennifer DeGregorio   Art, PK-12**

**NO. 06-10-6 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following individuals be appointed as athletic coaches:**

**Michael Crudale, Head Boys' Soccer, Park View Middle School**

**Step – 7**

**Class – D**

**Playing Competition – Recreational**

**Experience – Assistant Coach, Cranston High School East  
Indoor/Outdoor Track and Recreational Soccer**

**Certification – Rhode Island Coaches Certification; CPR/AED/First Aid  
Certified**

**Brian Flinn, Head Boys' Soccer, Bain Middle School**

**Step – 2**

**Class – D**

**Playing Competition – None**

**Experience – Assistant Coach, Cranston High School East Softball  
and Recreational Soccer**

**Certification – Rhode Island Coaches Certification; CPR/AED/First Aid  
Certified**

**Michael Rachiele, Head Girls' Soccer, Bain Middle School**

**Step – 7**

**Class – D**

**Page 6      October 16, 2006**

**Playing Competition – None**

**Experience – Head Coach Cranston High School East Softball and  
Recreational Soccer**

**Certification - Rhode Island Coaches Certification; CPR/AED/First Aid Certified**

**Daniel Burns – Head Girls’ Soccer, Western Hills Middle School**

**Step – 7**

**Class – D**

**Playing Competition – None**

**Experience – Head Coach Park View Middle School  
Baseball/Wrestling and Recreational Soccer**

**Certification - Rhode Island Coaches Certification; CPR/AED/First Aid Certified**

**Katie Dailey, Head Girls’ Soccer, Park View Middle School**

**Step – 1**

**Class – D**

**Playing Competition – High School**

**Experience – Recreational**

**Certification - Rhode Island Coaches Certification; CPR/AED/First Aid Certified**

**Mark Dengel, Head Boys’ Soccer, Western Hills Middle School**

**Step – 1**

**Class – D**

**Playing Competition – None**

**Experience – None**

**Certification - Rhode Island Coaches Certification; CPR/AED/First Aid**

## **Certified**

**NO. 06-10-7 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following non-certified employees be appointed:**

**John Leonelli, Teacher Assistant**

**Western Hills Middle School**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 16, 2006**

**Authorization – New**

**Fiscal Note: 12932032 519500**

**Bernadetta Petrone, Teacher Assistant**

**Western Hills Middle School**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 17 2006**

**Authorization – New**

**Fiscal Note: 12932032 519500**

**Page 7      October 16, 2006**

**Sheila Matarese, Teacher Assistant**

**Glen Hills School**

**Effective Date of Employment: October 16, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 12832032 519500**

**Marisa Mancini, Teacher Assistant**

**Cranston High School East**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 16, 2006**

**Authorization – New**

**Fiscal Note: 11332032 519500**

**Suzanne Holmes, CNA Instructor**

**Alternate Education Program**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 3, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 51362142 512100**

**J. Jordan Cannady, Instructor**

**Alternate Education Program**

**Effective Date of Employment - October 10, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 16278712 512100**

**Paul Hetu, Instructor**

**Alternate Education Program**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 4, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 16278712 512100**

**Fatima Khadar, Instructor**

**Alternate Education Program**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 10, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 16278712 512100**

**Nia Bert, Bus Monitor**

**Transportation**

**Effective Date of Employment – September 28, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 14347518 518600**

**Page 8      October 16, 2006**

**Kathleen Marion, Bus Monitor**

**Transportation**

**Effective Date of Employment – September 28, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 14347518 518600**

**Karen Scapinakis, Bus Driver**

**Transportation**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 17, 2006**

**Authorization – New**

**Fiscal Note: 14347543 517200**

**Rosa Orellana, Bus Driver**

**Transportation**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 17, 2006**

**Authorization – New**

**Fiscal Note: 14347543 517200**

**Kristen Sheridan, Bus Driver**

**Transportation**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 17, 2006**

**Authorization – New**

**Fiscal Note: 14347543 517200**

**Maryann Papa, Bus Driver**

**Transportation**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 17, 2006**

**Authorization – New**

**Fiscal Note: 14347543 517200**

**Nancy Thibault, Bus Driver**

**Transportation**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 17, 2006**

**Authorization – New**

**Fiscal Note: 14347543 517200**

**Gerald Jeff, Bus Driver**

**Transportation**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 17, 2006**

**Authorization – New**

**Fiscal Note: 14347543 517200**

**Page 9      October 16, 2006**

**Anna Lisa Venditelli, Three-hour Food Service Worker**

**Food Service**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 4, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 32347179 511000**

**Alexandra Bovill, Three-hour Food Service Worker**

**Food Service**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 11, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 32347179 511000**

**Andrea Conte, Three-hour Food Service Worker**

**Food Service**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 11, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 31947179 511000**

**Carlton Doyle, Four-hour Custodian**

**Plant**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 17, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 11247481 518200**

**Donald Mangiante, Bus Driver**

**Transportation**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 17, 2006**

**Authorization – New**

**Fiscal Note: 14347543 517200**

**NO. 06-10-8 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following non-certified personnel be appointed as substitutes on a temporary basis as needed:**

**SECRETARIES**

**Susan Gravel**

**Barbara Flaherty**

**Pamela Payne**

**Page 10      October 16, 2006**

**TEACHER ASSISTANTS**

**Paula Gonsalves**

**Deborah Derderian**

**Phyllis Pimental**

**Diane Jones**

**NO. 06-10-9 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following non-certified staff member be granted a leave of absence without compensation as provided in Article VI of the Statement of Agreement between the Cranston School Committee and the Cranston Administration Management Staff:**

**Susanne Perrino, Assistant Food Service Director**

**Effective Dates: October 2006 to October 2007**

**NO. 06-10-10 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the retirement of the following non-certified personnel be accepted:**

**Shirley Gallo, Grant Manager**

**Business Office**

**Effective Date: December 29, 2006**

**NO. 06-10-11 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the resignations of the following non-certified personnel be accepted:**

**Deanna Petrucci, Three-hour Food Service Worker**

**Food Service**

**Effective Date: September 25, 2006**

**Annmarie Maciel, Instructor**

**Alternate Education Program**

**Effective Date: September 15, 2006**

**Marie Lanzi, Three-hour Food Service Worker**

**Food Service**

**Effective Date: September 15, 2006**

**Margarita VanHooland, Three-hour Food Service Worker**

**Food Service**

**Effective Date: September 25, 2006**

**Page 11      October 16, 2006**

## **GRANTS**

**NO. 06-10-12 - RESOLVED, that the Cranston Public Schools submit to Speakers' Series-Listening to Learn, Wanting to Support, the following grant for the Special Education Parent Advisory Board:**

**All Cranston Public Schools      \$ 9,500**

**NO. 06-10-13 – RESOLVED, that the Cranston Public Schools submit**

**to Best Buy the following grant:**

**Interactive Observational Workbench for the Cranston \$ 2,500  
Area Career & Technical Center Electronics Program**

**NO. 06-10-14 – RESOLVED, that the Cranston Public Schools submit  
to Hamburger Helper Hometown Grants the following grants:**

**Discover Your Future – Cranston West \$10,620**

**Can't Come to Us, We'll Come to You – Cranston West \$15,000**

**Out of the Dark Ages and Into the Digital Age – Barrows  
School \$15,000**

**NO. 06-10-15 – RESOLVED, that the Cranston Public Schools submit  
to Kids in Need Foundation the following grant:**

**Kids in Need Foundation Teacher Grants – Bain Middle School \$  
500**

**NO. 06-10-16 – RESOLVED, that the Cranston Public Schools submit  
to Kids in Need Foundation – JOANN Stores, Inc. the following  
grants:**

**Bully Busters Program – Eden Park School \$ 500**

**We Are Not the Same! Celebrating Diversity and Uniqueness!**

**- Eden Park School \$ 500**

**- Dutemple School      \$    500**

## **BUSINESS**

**NO. 06-10-17 - RESOLVED, that the Administration be authorized to establish the following tuition rates for the 2006-2007 school year:**

**Half-day Kindergarten      \$ 5,869**

**Grades 1-12      \$11,737**

**Special Education      \$35,812**

**Page 12      October 16, 2006**

**Career and Technical Center – Regular    \$12,459**

**Career and Technical Center – Resource (1-2 classes) \$24,136**

**Career and Technical Center – Self-contained (3-5 classes) \$35,812**

**Sanders Academy      \$35,340**

**NO. 06-10-19 - RESOLVED, that the following purchases be approved (Fund 3 – School Food Service):**

**Holding Cabinets in the amount of \$3,243.97 each.**

**Number of bids issued    21**

**Number of bids received    8**

**School Food Authority Inspection in the amount of \$10,350 (06/07);  
\$10,868 (07/08)**

**Number of bids issued    4**

**Number of bids received    3**

### **POLICY AND PROGRAM**

**NO. 06-10-20 - RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following Conference/Field Trip of Long Duration be authorized:**

**1. Richard Abruzzini, Marketing and Distributive Education Teacher at the Cranston Area Career & Technical Center, and eight Rhode Island State**

**DECA officers and Cranston DECA chapter officers/members (students) to travel to Arlington, Virginia from November 2, 2006 to November 5, 2006 to attend the DECA SONAR Leadership Development Conference for leadership and career development sessions.**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Stycos and unanimously carried that these Resolutions be adopted**

**IX. Action Calendar / Action Agenda**

**SPONSORED BY MR. STYCOS AND MR. ARCHETTO**

**NO. 06-10-1 - Whereas, thirty-two classes are at cap and nineteen classes are over cap at Cranston High School East (cap is thirty students), and**

**Whereas, twenty-nine classes are at cap and fifty-two classes are over cap at Cranston High School West, and**

**Page 13      October 16, 2006**

**Whereas, last year the two high schools together had fewer than ten classes at or above cap, and**

**Whereas, children in classes with fewer than thirty students generally receive a better education than children in classes with thirty or more students, and**

**Whereas, five ESL classes at Cranston High School East have more than thirty students, and**

**Whereas, knowing the English language is critical to succeeding in the United States of America, and those students who do not know English are among our most vulnerable,**

**Be it RESOLVED that the Cranston School Committee directs the Superintendent to devise a plan to re-allocate funds necessary to reduce as many high school classes as possible to fewer than thirty students by hiring additional part-time or full-time teachers, and**

**Be it further RESOLVED that the Cranston School Committee also declares that its top priority in this class size reduction shall be ESL classes with thirty or more children, and**

**Be it further RESOLVED that the Superintendent shall present his plan to the School Committee as soon as possible. The School Committee shall consider the Superintendent's plan at a special meeting Monday, October 23, 2006.**

**Moved by Mr. Archetto and seconded by Mr. Stycos that this Resolution be adopted.**

**Mr. Stycos asked Administration if these numbers were the best they had because the Resolution went in with one set of numbers and then during the week he had changed them to the more recent set of numbers. In response, Mr. Nero stated that the first set of numbers were from two weeks ago. The ones he received one week ago Friday were the most accurate. Mr. Nero added that he had the numbers figured two ways. One is with all subjects, and in the second figures he removed all the health and physical education which normally run high. As a former middle school principal, he could tell Mr. Stycos**

that most of them are at cap or over cap. Mr. Stycos referred to the ESL classes at Cranston High School East and noted that in the first version of numbers it was five and in the second version the numbers weren't available. He asked if there was any further information on those numbers. Mr. Nero responded that he wasn't sure if those numbers weren't available or not applicable.

Mr. Stycos stated that the purpose of this Resolution was pretty clear.

There is a horrible situation with all these classes having thirty or more students in them. He further commented that everyone knows that education works in smaller classes and that this, as far as he knew, had never happened before in the high schools where there

Page 14      October 16, 2006

were this many classes at cap or over cap. This is something that needs to be addressed. He was hoping that this Resolution would pass and that Administration would give the School Committee a plan or ideas they could look at to adopt or amend and take it from there.

Mr. Nero remarked that at Cranston West the numbers are high right now. These numbers have gone down considerably and will continue to go down especially those students in Honors classes who begin to realize that it becomes difficult and may drop down in a regular CP class. He asked the school to give him the numbers they had at the end of the year as to where they are right now. He asked the

assistant principal in charge of academics at Cranston West to give the 05-06 numbers. Presently there are twenty-nine classes that are at cap at Cranston West and fifty-two classes that are over cap. At the end of the year last year, there were nineteen classes at cap and twenty-three over cap. He asked the committee to look at that as the year progresses when they will get closer to the numbers that are traditionally at cap or over cap. There is a difference of twenty-nine now and nineteen where they would be at the end of the year based on last year's numbers and fifty-two classes that are over cap, and they ended the year with twenty-three. They have gone down considerably in the interim period. He believed the progress reports and the interim reports will be coming out tomorrow in the schools, and they will be able to better judge where they will be between now and the end of the first quarter.

Mr. Archetto asked if the statistics were from both high schools or just from Cranston West, and Mr. Nero responded that the numbers were from Cranston West only. Mr. Archetto responded that the Resolution states that the over cap problem is on the eastern side of the City. Mr. Nero stated that he had the Cranston East numbers, and he figured them removing the health and physical education classes as well. He couldn't get the 05-06 numbers for it. Mr. Archetto responded that the problem is more on the eastern side than the western side, so Mr. Nero would have been better off using the statistics from the eastern side of the City. Mr. Nero commented that the classes over cap are higher on the western side of the City than

they are on the eastern side of the City right now. At Cranston East now, there are thirty-two classes that are at cap and nineteen over cap. There are more classes at cap on the eastern side, but there are four less classes above cap on the eastern side than there is on the western side. It is more or less balancing off. As the numbers go down above cap, they reach at cap, and the numbers go higher at cap than they do over cap.

Mr. Traficante stated that he would like to assume the best case scenario. He asked the committee to keep in mind that they are still faced with a \$1.2 million shortfall in their budget. He stated that the study halls had to be eliminated by mandate through the secondary school reform and asked if there were additional classrooms to move these students at both East and West. Mr. Scherza responded that right now at Cranston East, even if administration puts on another teacher, there wouldn't be a room available

Page 15      October 16, 2006

to put the students in. There is construction going on, and they are using every room available. In addition, they are using sections of the facility that aren't classrooms during the period of construction. They would not be able to accommodate more students at Cranston East. Secondly, Mr. Scherza stated that he agreed with Mr. Stycos. As an educator, he would like to see more teachers and would like to get every class size down, but they have to balance that realistically

with the approximately \$1.2 million gap that they still have budgetarily. Secondly, he indicated that he would ask Mr. Stycos to consider that this is a common trend at the beginning of the year, and administration has discussed this with the scheduling people at both Cranston East and Cranston West starting last spring. One of the phenomena that happens at both places knowing the trend is that they tend to schedule more classes than are minimally necessary. They do this at the college prep level primarily knowing full well that when the first report card comes out there is a large number of students taking AP courses or Honors courses who are having a difficult time and drop down a level. At the end of the first quarter, they see a dramatic drop in the number of over cap classes, and many of the classes that are under cap considerably will start to fill up more. He felt it would be more prudent to look at it once they have the results. Otherwise, by acting prematurely, they might be putting on teachers that they ultimately may not need in light of the budgetary situation.

Mr. Traficante stated that Mr. Scherza addressed Cranston East and asked about the situation at Cranston West with regard to classrooms. Mr. Scherza responded that he was sure on the number of classrooms, but he thought they were not much better off than Cranston East. Mr. Knowlton, Cranston West Principal, stated that they had some space; but they don't have any situations where one teacher can be assigned a room. They have a lot of teachers who are still moving around room to room. He was sure they could

accommodate some, but he didn't know exactly how many. He thought that room to room and period by period there might be some room but not a lot.

Mr. Lupino asked Mr. Nero that in his assessment comparing last year to this year what the population at Cranston West was last year, and Mr. Nero responded that he didn't know the figure off hand. Mr. Lupino responded that the committee would need to know last year's figure compared to this year's in order to make a fair assessment of those numbers. Mr. Stycos responded that according to the information that the committee received last October the population at Cranston West was 1,808 students and this year it is 1,803. At Cranston East, last year it was 1,730 students and this year it is 1,758. The Charter School last year was 96, and this year it is 119 students. Mr. Nero pointed out that last year Cranston East had three classes that ran inclusion versus over thirty classes this year that are running inclusion. There will be more special education students who are going to be in a total inclusive environment. He asked them to remember that the special education teacher goes into those classes with the big numbers and provides the accommodations either as an inclusive self-contained classroom or as the resource teacher. Mr. Lupino asked what the last date is for

Page 16      October 16, 2006

students to drop classes. In response, Mr. Scherza stated that unlike

colleges and universities that have a two-week drop and add period, the school district has people doing it at the end of first quarter and second quarter and continues to go on throughout the year. Until the committee changes the policy, it is open-ended for students all year long. Mr. Lupino asked that of the Cranston West classes that were over cap how many were AP classes. Mr. Nero stated that he didn't have the numbers for Cranston West by sections. For Cranston East, there is one over cap AP Calculus class, and there is an Algebra II that is at cap, one class of Algebra I that is at cap.

Mr. Lupino stated that he was concerned about the October 23rd date that was stated in this Resolution. He thought it was too early realistically as far as a time frame is concerned. He asked Mr. Stycos why he chose that date, and in response Mr. Stycos stated that it was a problem that needed to be addressed quickly. He picked a Monday night because other nights of the week are difficult for other members of the committee who have other meetings to attend.

Mrs. Greifer stated that she was concerned that the classes hadn't settled down yet, and to ask Administration to formulate a plan to possibly hire more teachers given the deficit structure the district is in and the fact that so many of these classes are actually at cap which is the maximum number ideally in a class, she didn't feel that a class at cap is such a terrible thing. It is not ideal, but if they are at cap she is not as concerned as with those over cap. She would like to see how this shakes down in the first quarter before making

Administration come up with a plan to possibly hire teachers. The committee would be talking about hundreds of thousands of dollars to hire additional teachers, and the district is already in a \$1.2 million deficit situation. She would prefer that this Resolution be tabled for another month to give the numbers a chance to settle down. At that time, the committee could see where they are at at that point.

Mr. Stycos stated that whether or not the district has the money should be a major consideration on what the plan is, but he felt it would be better to get some possibilities in place and start discussing those quickly because the school year is running along. He was sure that with students dropping out of school these numbers would go down over the year, but the district has a situation it never had before; and the committee needs to look at it. He questioned whether or not any of this situation could be addressed by non-resident students in the high schools or if they think this is under control. He asked why this is happening in the high schools. On October 23rd he wouldn't see the committee hiring new teachers, but the committee would have a discussion to look at possibilities and discuss implementation dates.

Mr. Traficante asked Mr. Stycos if he would accept a friendly amendment to move that date back to the end of the first quarter which is approximately two weeks from that point. He believed the date to be November 7th. This would give Administration an entire quarter to research the numbers to get more accurate numbers. Mr.

**asked if the committee would have more accurate numbers available on November 7th, and Mr. Nero responded that there is a policy which states that a student can withdraw at the first quarter and receive a WP withdrawal. If they withdraw at anytime during the rest of the school year, they can withdraw but with a WF. Some students will balance it out to figure out what they are going to do at the first quarter. If Administration waits for the first quarter and gives that approximately one week for the students to do their withdrawal slips, etc. it would be better to wait five days beyond the end of the first quarter which would be November 19th. He would have updates at that point.**

**Mr. Lupino suggested that a work session is already scheduled for November 15th. He could see no reason why an initial plan based on the numbers at that time can be formulated and presented to the committee on November 15th. Mr. Lupino referred to the third paragraph from the end of this Resolution. He asked Mr. Stycos that even if they found the funds where they would find the room. Mr. Stycos responded that the committee should address Mr. Traficante's suggestion and go on from there.**

**Mr. Stycos agreed to Mr. Traficante's friendly amendment to have a**

report on November 15th, which is the date of the work session. Mr. Nero added that the quarter ends on November 14th, and he advised the committee to give it at least three or four days so that the issue will be that as students get to their guidance counselors to add and drop courses, he didn't know if that would fit into this time line. Mr. Lupino told Mr. Nero that he should base his recommendations on what could be done which also can be adjusted down to the actual numbers the committee has on that date. Mr. Nero added that looking at the Cranston West figures they had at the end of the school year, administration may be adjusting pretty close. On the room situation at Cranston East, they are presently using the Briggs Conference Room for personal literacy plans for small classes as well as Truancy Court on Wednesday afternoons for Cranston East.

Mr. Lupino commented that to the best of his knowledge the committee would have a report, not necessarily a definitive plan but a report, on November 15th. Mr. Stycos referred to Mr. Lupino's early comment that there is no room at East so he moved to amend this Resolution.

Mr. Stycos moved to amend this Resolution to change the third paragraph from the bottom which reads "by hiring additional part-time or full-time teachers" to read "by hiring additional part-time or full-time teachers or teachers' aides".

Mr. Lupino stated that he agreed with Mr. Stycos and commented that

what wasn't in this report are some of the inclusion situations. Some of that may be addressed by saying that there are aides with these inclusion students.

**Page 18      October 16, 2006**

Mr. Lupino asked Mr. Laliberte if ESL is now known as ELL throughout the district or if it was only in the elementary grades. Mr. Laliberte responded that it is ELL district wide. Mr. Laliberte noted that ELL stands for English Language Learner.

Mr. Stycos moved to make the following amendment: In paragraph five, change ESL to English Language Learner. In paragraph seven, add the words "or teachers' aides" after the words "full-time teachers". In paragraph eight, change ESL to English Language Learner. In paragraph nine, remove the word "special".

Mr. Traficante seconded the motion.

This amendment was adopted unanimously.

This Resolution as amended was adopted unanimously.

This Resolution now reads:

**SPONSORED BY MR. STYCOS AND MR. ARCHETTO**

**NO. 06-10-1 - Whereas, thirty-two classes are at cap and nineteen classes are over cap at Cranston High School East (cap is thirty students), and**

**Whereas, twenty-nine classes are at cap and fifty-two classes are over cap at Cranston High School West, and**

**Whereas, last year the two high schools together had fewer than ten classes at or above cap, and**

**Whereas, children in classes with fewer than thirty students generally receive a better education than children in classes with thirty or more students, and**

**Whereas, five English Language Learner classes at Cranston High School East have more than thirty students, and**

**Whereas, knowing the English language is critical to succeeding in the United States of America, and those students who do not know English are among our most vulnerable,**

**Be it RESOLVED that the Cranston School Committee directs the Superintendent to devise a plan to re-allocate funds necessary to reduce as many high school classes as possible to fewer than thirty**

**students by hiring additional part-time or full-time teachers or teachers' aides, and**

**Page 19      October 19, 2006**

**Be it further RESOLVED that the Cranston School Committee also declares that its top priority in this class size reduction shall be English Language Learner classes with thirty or more children, and**

**Be it further RESOLVED that the Superintendent shall present his plan to the School Committee as soon as possible. The School Committee shall consider the Superintendent's plan at a meeting Wednesday, November 15, 2006.**

**NO. 06-10-2 – RESOLVED, that the agreement between the Cranston School Committee and NAGE, RI Local 155 Food Service Workers, be approved.**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Traficante and unanimously carried that this Resolution be adopted.**

**NO. 06-10-3 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the appointment of Energy Educator Manager for**

**Cranston Public Schools, be approved.**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer and seconded by Mr. Stycos that this Resolution be adopted.**

**Mr. Scherza stated that he was recommending to the committee the appointment of Ms. Karen Verrengia to the position of Energy Educator Manager for Cranston Public Schools.**

**Mr. Traficante stated that he wished to abstain from voting on this Resolution. He further commented that this had no reflection on the candidate being recommended for the position. He stated that he was concerned about the procedure they had to use. He didn't think that the outsiders had to be eliminated from any kind of participation for a possible candidacy in this area.**

**Mr. Lupino commented that this is the third School Committee he has been on where they have tried to fill this exercise. He is finally happy to see that this is happening. There were a couple of glitches the first time; it is about time that this is done. It is an extremely successful program throughout the country as close as Warwick. He understood Energy Education's take on trying to have an internal candidate so he respected Mr. Traficante's take on it but he also understood Energy Education's viewpoint on it. He further commented that he would be voting to support this appointment as he has supported getting an energy program for the third term. He was happy to see that the**

**committee was actually doing this.**

**This Resolution was adopted with Mr. Traficante abstaining.**

**Page 20      October 16, 2006**

**NO. 06-10-4 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following certified personnel be appointed for the remainder of the 2006-2007 school year:**

**Meaghan McGonagle, salary to be at the fifth step of the prevailing salary schedule**

**Education – Sienna College, BS**

**Experience – New York School Department**

**Certification – Secondary Business Education**

**Assignment – Cranston Area Career & Technical Center, Finance Academy, 1.0 FTE**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 23, 2006**

**Authorization – Replacement**

**Fiscal Note: 17430712 512100**

**Denise DeMagistris, salary to be at the eleventh step plus PhD of the prevailing salary schedule**

**Education – Rhode Island College, BA and MA; Johnson & Wales University, Ed.D**

**Experience – Foster/Glocester School District**

**Certification – Reading**

**Assignment – Reading, Bain Middle School, 1.0 FTE**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 23, 2006**

**Fiscal Note: 50915121 512100**

**Melissa Colando, salary to be at the third step of the prevailing salary schedule**

**Education – Rhode Island College, BA**

**Experience – Cranston Public Schools' Substitute**

**Certification – Secondary English**

**Assignment – English, Cranston High School West, .5 FTE**

**Effective Date of Employment – October 23, 2006**

**Fiscal Note: 12611012 512100**

**Mr. Lupino noted that there was an addendum to this Resolution to add the name of Melissa Colando.**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Archetto and unanimously carried that this Resolution be adopted.**

**NO. 06-10-18 - RESOLVED, that the following purchases be approved:**

**Used Buses in the amount of \$7,750**

**Number of bids issued 5**

**Number of bids received 4**

**Page 21      October 16, 2006**

**Musical Instrument Lease/Purchase in the amount of \$134,019.65 over a five-year period.**

**Number of bids issued 21**

**Number of bids received 3**

**Mr. Lupino noted that there was an addendum to this Resolution to change the amount for the musical instrument lease/purchase from \$141,751.74 to \$134,019.65.**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer and seconded by Mr. Traficante that this Resolution be adopted.**

**Mr. Stycos referred to the purchase of used buses and asked if this amount is what was allocated for used buses or if the amount was more or less. In addition, he asked how many used buses would be purchased with these funds. In response, Mr. Balducci indicated that because this is being funded by the City, it doesn't show up in the Cranston Public Schools' budget. He believed there is between**

**\$75,000 to \$100,000 for the purchase of buses. This is only one purchase for \$7,750 so they are well within that limit. This amount is for one 1996 bus. Mr. Stycos asked why the amount of the lease/purchase changed. In response, he told Mr. Stycos that during the work session he told the committee that he had placed a bid to see what the numbers would come in at. Based on the discussion during the work session, the following morning his office contacted the company; and they indicated that the interest rate went down. They, therefore, took advantage of a lower interest rate which is an approximate \$7,000 savings.**

**Mr. Stycos asked if this lease/purchase could be paid off early, and Mr. Balducci responded that there is no pre-payment penalty associated with the lease. Mr. Stycos requested that when Mr. Balducci is preparing budgets in the future this be considered. He commented that it is good the interest rate went down, but zero is the best interest.**

**This Resolution was adopted unanimously.**

## **X. New Business**

**Mr. Stycos requested that with regard to the Resolution concerning class size, he asked for the number of classes that are inclusion where the teacher goes into the classroom and there is a second instructor. Secondly, if possible, he asked where they were on class**

size in the high schools on approximately the same date. Mr. Nero responded that he tried to do that, and the high schools can't do it. Thirdly, he would like to know what is happening with the ELL classes.

Page 22      October 16, 2006

## **XI. Public Hearing on Non-agenda Items**

Michael Pirolli, 111 Mystery Farm Drive – Mr. Pirolli stated that he wished to speak on the elimination of volunteer coaches from Cranston West hockey. He stated that he wanted to address concerns about the elimination of volunteer hockey coaches during the games and practices for the upcoming 2006-2007 season for Cranston West. For the past eight seasons, volunteer coaches have assisted the program at many levels on and off the ice to ensure the safety of all the children as well as the success of the hockey team. The elimination of these volunteers leaving only two paid appointed coaches will have many negative effects which include: 1) the inability to assist or accompany any injured student or player should he have to leave the ice rink. An example of that is the JV and varsity have scheduling conflicts that sometimes overlap. Many times junior varsity games are scheduled for late in the afternoon, and they run late and overlap with any varsity games that may be scheduled that evening leaving a single coach to run both teams with no assistance.

A player who has been injured has no supervision. Anytime a player is injured, a coach usually escorts that child to the locker room and sits with that child in the locker room until a medical person or a parent can come. A lot of times at JV hockey games parents, because of the times of the games, are not there so the supervision of all these players is up to the coach. If something should happen to a player on the JV team, then the coach has to leave the bench with no one there to coach the team. 2) Try-out management for more than sixty students at various ability levels – come try-out time there is anywhere up to sixty students who could be on the ice at any one given time again leaving two coaches to handle that amount of children. There are many varsity and JV teams across the city that utilize volunteer coaching staff. They feel that the hockey program at Cranston West should be entitled to the same resources. They have asked for community support on this matter and have obtained signatures from parents who are in favor of the continued participation of volunteers. The selection of these volunteers can and should be at the discretion of this committee keeping in mind that the school system uses volunteers at many levels from field trips, chaperones, to room mothers. They will be happy to address any questions the committee has at this time and ask that the committee's decision in this matter be swift as the season is rapidly approaching.

Mr. Traficante stated that when he was coaching for Cranston East there were a number of volunteer coaches, however, it was the

understanding by the League that he had to have a BCI check done on each of the volunteer coaches and secondly he had to meet the standards that were required by any coach such as first aid, etc. Thirdly, he had to make sure they had insurance because they could be injured as well. Mr. Lupino stated that Mr. Traficante, Athletic Director, was not present at this meeting. He asked Mr. Pirolli who is a volunteer assistant if he had to meet any coaching qualifications, and Mr. Pirolli responded that they yield themselves to yearly background checks by signing the forms giving them to the appropriate people. What happens with them after that, he is not sure. Every year every assistant coach has signed his form, and they have been

Page 23      October 16, 2006

cleared under all rules and regulations up to this point. He has been involved with the system for eleven years and this past eight years on and off the ice assisting. Mr. Lupino noted that USA Hockey also covers a portion of the insurance on that also. This issue has been on the minds of some of the parents particularly directed toward him because of his involvement with the Cranston West hockey program in the past. He thought there were some extenuating circumstances in this case, however, he still felt strongly that if there were issues with the present volunteer assistants he could understand replacing them. However, he strongly felt, and the Superintendent knows how he feels about this, that this is placing an unfair disadvantage on one

particular team. As recent as two months ago, the committee gave accolades to a baseball volunteer assistant coach without whom they could not have won the state baseball championship. That is the concern. He has spoken with Mr. Scerbinski and Mr. Pirolli who were in that role last year as volunteers. They assured him that if the problem were with them they would respectfully not participate, but to not appoint or not to have volunteer assistants would very adversely affect the success of the program.

Mr. Traficante stated that he left out one point which is that a particular volunteer coach could not coach without the assistance of a certified coach who was hired by the school system. As an example, the coach could not leave the JV team with all volunteer coaches so that the assistant coach goes up to the varsity level. Mr. Lupino added that when his son was on the JV team, they had a very successful team. With volunteers, the year before his son was a freshman, and they had three games. His son was a freshman, there was an assistant coach and a volunteer; and there were nineteen games. The following year they lost some involvement due to scheduling, and they were down to four games. It is a rule that the coach does not leave. If something happens with an injury, etc., it would be the volunteer who would leave with the injured player or leave the ice or the game would stop. Mr. Traficante stated that the head coach is responsible for the attitude and behavior of all assistant coaches.

Mr. Lupino asked Mr. Pirolli if there was anything different than what he had addressed to Mr. Lupino. Mr. Stycos stated that he didn't understand what was going on. He added that he didn't understand why some sports are allowed assistant coaches but they are not allowed at Cranston West hockey. Mr. Scherza responded to Mr. Lupino that Mr. Lupino knew the reasons why it shouldn't be discussed and give full disclosure. There are other people who have rights, and it cannot be fully addressed publicly. Mr. Stycos asked if there was anything the committee could discuss, and Mr. Scherza commented that they couldn't. Mr. Lupino asked if there was any way they could rectify the situation. He asked Mr. Pirolli when hockey tryouts start, and Mr. Pirolli responded that they start on November 21st. They are allowed to have the children on the ice for tryouts. There will be no captains' practices this year because those practices are usually supervised by the assistant coaches. With off-ice training, usually the captains or last year's captains or upcoming senior class will take the remaining players and upcoming players to do preliminary warm-ups and off-ice drills to get themselves in

Page 24      October 16, 2006

shape. Mr. Lupino asked Mr. Scherza if it was reasonable that they could have some kind of an answer for these parents by November 14th which is a week before November 21st. Mr. Scherza responded that this is a bigger issue liability wise and insurance wise. There are a lot of pieces in supervision as well. There are employees being

paid from other sources and reporting to the Internal Revenue Services. There are a number of issues here, and to say that the district is going to have it, to be politically correct, he would not do that. If the committee wanted to discuss it, he would entertain a policy by the committee absolving this administration of all accountability in those areas. Mr. Lupino responded that the district currently has two football programs going right now, and he asked if there were any volunteer assistants on the football teams.

Mr. Stycos suggested that the committee listen to anyone else from the public who wished to talk. The committee could ask them questions, and then the committee could go back into Executive Session to determine what is happening. He would like to know what is happening, and at the same time he wanted to give these people an opportunity to say what they had to say.

Mr. Pirolli stated that he read his statement to the committee. He personally commented that for every sport in the City of Cranston there are always volunteers involved. Right now between football, baseball, and hockey they all have volunteers. Football has four volunteer coaches and have other paid coaches. This committee is hopefully going to decide whether or not hockey has any volunteer coaches. Mr. Scherza has made a decision, and the committee needs to discuss it. It basically singles out the hockey team and only the Cranston West hockey team.

Mr. Traficante commented that it is quite apparent that the committee and Administration is not opposed to volunteer coaches. Apparently there is something behind the scenes that the committee is not aware of, and the committee has to get to the bottom of it. Perhaps there is a reason the Superintendent feels the way he does. Until the committee knows what the reason is the committee can't comment on it. He told Mr. Pirolli that he didn't want him to walk away with the idea that the committee is opposed to volunteer coaches because he coached for twenty-five years of his life. He knows the value of having as many coaches on the field as possible to get the best out of the kids and also for their safety. Mr. Pirolli responded that he has been doing it for thirty-two years, and he felt the same way. As far as the volunteer coaches, he is a volunteer coach and a volunteer assistant. He is willing to step away. If there is a problem, he asked the committee to address the problem; don't hurt the program. That is what the parents are trying to get across, but it doesn't seem to be getting into the right venue. If the committee needs to appoint someone that they feel is qualified, that is fine. As far as issues of insurance, regulations, and BCI, if every volunteer coach has to go through that for every team and for every sport in Cranston, then so be it. But, to start that regulation on November 21st to sanction out just the hockey team, is in his

Page 25      October 16, 2006

opinion that it is not mandated under prudent policy. If the committee

is opposed to any type of situation, this policy could have been addressed long before the school season started so that it affected every school and every program so that everyone would have been on the same level playing field. To start it midway through the school year and discuss it only with one sport, one can't help but feel they are being singled out. If there is a problem, address the problem; don't hurt the program.

Mrs. Greifer stated that under the new law mentioned by Mr. Lupino earlier the committee can now listen and enter into discussion regarding non-agenda items. However, the committee can take no action on anything they discussed. She asked whether or not the committee is permitted to go back into Executive Session which would be taking an action based on what is supposed to be an informal discussion under non-agenda items. Mr. Traficante stated that he didn't expect the School Committee to take any action tonight.

All the committee members would like to know the qualifications of the problem. Mr. Lupino stated that he believed one of the underlying situations in this is a personnel matter, and the committee is allowed to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel. Mr. Lupino told Mr. Pirolli that the committee would get some kind of communication back to him as early as they possibly can.

## **XII. Announcement of Future Meetings**

The next meeting is a work session and will be held on Wednesday,

**November 15th, at 6:00 p.m. in the Briggs Conference Room.**

### **XIII. Adjournment**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Traficante and unanimously carried that the meeting be adjourned to Executive Session.**

**The meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 8:15 p.m.**

**Mr. Lupino reconvened public session at 8:51 p.m.**

**Moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Archetto and unanimously carried that the minutes of the October 16, 2006 Executive Session remain confidential.**

**Page 26      October 16, 2006**

**Moved by Mr. Traficante, seconded by Mrs. Greifer and unanimously carried that the meeting be adjourned.**

**There being no further business to come before the meeting it was adjourned at  
8:53 p.m.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Anthony J. Lupino**  
**Clerk**